

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AIRPORT ACTIVITIES**

**November 17, 2004**

**5:00 PM**

Chairman DeVries called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen DeVries, Gatsas, Garrity, Thibault

Absent: Alderman Porter

Messrs: K. Dillon

Chairman DeVries addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Airport updates provided by Kevin Dillon, Airport Director, as follows:

- I. Capital Program/Project;
- II. Airline(s);
- III. Residential Sound Insulation Program;
  - Contour update; and
  - Zoning update.

Mr. Dillon stated I'll just go through this quickly. Some of the major projects that we're working. First is Runway 624. As we've discussed before, the Airport is planning a complete reconstruction of that runway on the sections that were not done at the time we did the major runway. It would be from the runway intersections all the way to the south. We're going to take the opportunity at that time to not only reconstruct and redo the drainage of the runway, but we're going to take care of the safety overrun area on the Runway 6 end. What that will entail is us essentially building a retaining wall right off the end of the runway along Airport Road, back filling that retaining wall and that will give us approximately another 160 feet of safety overrun on that end of the runway. Total project cost for that is estimated to be \$6.8 million. We anticipate starting that work next summer; that's about 120 days worth of work. Following that we will program in the Runway 24 end, the other end of Runway 624. That's the much more extensive project where we're talking about actually carrying out the runway

safety overrun area across Willow Street. It's about a \$20 million project; we're still discussing the perimeters of that project with the FAA, but right now we have a budget number of about \$20 million for that, of which the FAA will fully fund to the 75 percent funding level that we're allowed to take at this point.

Chairman DeVries stated Kevin, if you're done with that particular project presentation, are there any questions from the panel?

Alderman Garrity asked Kevin, is that runway going to be closed during that construction?

Mr. Dillon answered yes.

Alderman Garrity asked so we can expect all of the traffic on the north/south next summer?

Mr. Dillon answered for that period of time, that's correct. We are looking into the possibility of still maintaining a piece of the runway open for general aviation traffic. There are many aircraft that operate at the airport that could operate with 3,000 feet. We're still engineering that through to see if we can do that, but right now we are going into it with the planned closure of the runway for that period.

Alderman Garrity asked so that will start early next summer?

Mr. Dillon answered that's correct.

Alderman Garrity asked how long is it going to be out of service?

Mr. Dillon answered 120 days.

Alderman Garrity asked that's to do both ends? The South Willow Street side is obviously going to take you longer.

Mr. Dillon answered no. South Willow Street is not programmed until federal fiscal year 2006 and 2007, which would be a year after that. So we're only talking about Runway 6 end, as well as the reconstruction of the runway from the intersections south. I just want to point out as part of the project, just to make you aware. There are two buildings that we will be taking down as part of that project that are located on the side of the runway. We do have waivers right now from the FAA to allow those buildings to be there, but they do fall within what is called the imaginary services of that runway that we should have all our obstructions moved from. As part of this work this work, we're going to take those buildings down. That's the old Fire Station at the Airport as well as one the original brick hangers.

That brick hanger is designated as a historical building, but we have catalogued the entire building before taking it down.

Chairman DeVries asked is there any commercial lease use of the two buildings that you'll be taking down?

Mr. Dillon answered no.

Chairman DeVries asked so nobody will be displaced that's currently doing business?

Mr. Dillon answered no. Right now we use it for our own Airport storage.

Chairman DeVries asked when you complete the work next summer, is that planned to be daytime construction? There will not be any construction at night or will there be disturbances to the neighborhoods?

Mr. Dillon answered we haven't fully engineered it out, but I don't anticipate night work.

Chairman DeVries stated you would certainly let us know if...?

Mr. Dillon answered absolutely. In terms of parking, just to let you know that we continue to move forward with the design of the parking garage. We're taking a look at some of the conceptual designs. There is going to be a lot of roadway work that would be associated with that. Just to remind you we're talking about building a twin of the existing parking garage. We would probably not build the full garage out; we would probably stage that. We have not made decisions yet whether or not that would be horizontal or vertical staging, but most likely we would not go with the full buildout. If you look at the full buildout in today's dollars, we're putting a budget number of about \$75 million towards that garage, with another \$10 million associated roadway work. So right now we are having some discussions with the rental cars that will be using a portion of that garage. It appears that we would probably utilize about \$50 million of that up front to do the first stage down the road based upon demand. One of the things that we're looking at is potential property acquisitions at the Airport that will allow us to put additional surface parking in that area. If we can get those property acquisitions completed, we'll probably push off the start date for construction of that garage, which is not scheduled for sometime spring of 2006. Parking lot F, that's the new surface parking lot that we're building behind the Highlander Inn. We have completed the paving. The only thing that's left to be done there is the striping, fencing, the revenue control equipment, and some lighting. We'll have all of that completed by March of next year. That will be right in line for when we need for

our peak travel periods, however, it will be available this Thanksgiving and Christmas if we do need it.

Chairman DeVries stated the property acquisitions that you referenced for surface parking. Is within the inner Airport campus?

Mr. Dillon answered that's correct. We're talking about the Beget and Summit properties.

Chairman DeVries asked the surface parking lot that is under construction now, that is 400 car parking?

Mr. Dillon answered about 700.

Chairman DeVries stated I just wanted to ask you one last question and I know the answer to this. But all of these projects were previously approved under the 1995 Master Plan for the Airport. You've not done anything that's above and beyond the prior master plan?

Mr. Dillon answered that's correct. The master plan did not speak to a parking lot F, but it spoke to increase parking facilities.

Chairman DeVries asked and the runway expansions?

Mr. Dillon replied that's correct. In terms of the old terminal or the original terminal building for the Airport, you may be aware that we have relocated that building to the other side of the Airport. That was a requirement we had as part of the original construction permits for the overall construction program. The State Historical Society asked us to preserve that building, we agreed to do it, we relocated it over to the eastern side of the Airport off from Kelley Road. Essentially we're completing a complete refurbishment of the building at this point and then we plan to enter into a long-term lease for \$1 a year with the State Aviation Historical Society that will operate it on our behalf as an aviation museum. That is also a requirement that we had in the permit that we had to make the building available to the public so it's a good use and a good agreement that we have been able to reach. And in fact we have a ribbon cutting scheduled for December 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00AM that you'll all be receiving an invitation to. And lastly, we have the terminal expansion project. Just to update you. We continue to progress the design of another terminal expansion. That will be on the Southwest Airlines side of the building. Right now we're looking to go forward with a three gate terminal expansion. We would also building in additional ticket counter space as part of this terminal expansion. If you look at where we're at in the building, all new ticket counters would have to now be to the left-hand side of the

main escalators as you enter the building. As you know all of the ticket counters on the right. We would start building out counters on the left as we need that going forward. This will probably be the last terminal expansion that will be directly attached to the existing building. Future terminal expansions while we have the ability to do them, will have connectivity to this building but will most likely be operated as a separate facility. One of the things that we continue to be concerned about is when this building was originally designed in early 1990's it was designed as a one-level terminal facility, so you can't just keep hanging gates off the side because you're going to cause terminal congestion or traffic congestion in front the building. So how we're going to deal with that in the future is we will probably start to separate the traffic flow in front of the building and bring separate traffic flows to these future gates, that will be built after this next terminal expansion. One of the things that we are looking at very closely though is the timing of when we go forward with actual construction. As I said, we're into design at this point, but we very well may end up just putting the design on the shelf and having it ready to go because we continue to watch the airline situation. As you know we have two carriers out at the Airport in bankruptcy today. Delta Airlines keeps making noise about getting very close to bankruptcy, so we're very hesitate to pull the trigger on another terminal expansion where the possibility may exist that we may get some of the existing gates come back to the Airport and that would take care of our expansion needs. So we think we're going to know a lot more about the airline situation in February and March. US Airways, for example, has some major payments due in February. We're going to see how they are able to handle those payments, and based on what we see we'll make some decisions about the timing of going forward with this. But it's still money very well spent. We are going forward with the design because I'm very confident that in the future we're going to need this terminal expansion at some point. We continue to have great success at the Airport. We will end the year, if we stay on the activity level that we've been experiencing, handle 4 million passengers at the Airport. That's an all time record for us. Manchester Airport is now the 62<sup>nd</sup> largest airport in the country. We continue to hear from our existing carriers that they want to add additional routes. Southwest, for example, has just announced two additional Chicago flights. One will start in January; one will start in February. That's on top of some additional Florida service that they recently put on line, and US Airways has added eight flights since August. So we continue to get some good activity increases from our existing carriers, but we're also working with some other carriers. We spend a lot of time on the road trying to recruit additional carriers to the airport. Principally we're looking at carriers such as JetBlue. That would be a nice compliment to Southwest.

Alderman Garrity asked I'm just curious. What's the daily take off and landings? Just for the commercial airline business?

Mr. Dillon answered we have about 100 departures per day. Just to give you an update on the residential sound insulation program. To date we've completed 704 homes, 665 in Manchester and 39 in Londonderry. Right now under we have 42 homes. They should all be completed by December 15<sup>th</sup>. Homes remaining to be done that we have not offered soundproofing to ever before, we stand at about 260. There are many more homes that are eligible, but for varying reasons people have told us they're not interested in getting the soundproofing. So there's 260 that we still feel are left to be done. We have a group under design at this point, 48 homes that will we'll be starting in March. So they're already into the design process and program to go. Some of those homes actually fall outside the contour. So we're starting to get into those homes that we were able to work with the FAA and make eligible that they're really not inside the contour but they were close enough to be considered contiguous to the contour. So we're going to start to move into some of those. And then beyond that we have approximately 212 homes left. We feel very confident that we're going to continue to get good funding allocations from the FAA and we'd like to think that we'll be able to progress through all of those homes within the next two to three years. In terms of contour, we have told you in the past that we were going through a process to update the sound eligibility contour. Typically airports go through that every five years; take a look at their contours and update them. We have made the decision that we are going to stop the update at this point, because it became very clear to us that we do not have enough information to adequately look at those contours. We have not been in the existing runway configuration long enough to have enough data to feel confident about the contours that we're developing. Also, I was recently approached by the FAA and they have indicated that they would like to do air space studies surrounding Manchester Airport to see if there should be some different routings of aircraft in and around the airport, which if that's done could start to dramatically impact the contours. So we feel it's best at this point to suspend that work until we have some of this additional information. And I think it also works to our benefit quite frankly to do that, because some of the initial looks that we did when we started to look at updating these contours, showed that the contours if anything would be shrinking not expanding. So it's better quite frankly for a soundproofing program to remain under the existing contours because it makes many more homes eligible. So at this point we feel it's best just to suspend that project.

Alderman Garrity asked Kevin, when you say suspend, do you have idea of how long you're going to suspend the study or the contours?

Mr. Dillon answered I think a lot depends on how long it takes FAA to look at some of this airspace information. But I would suspect we could be talking of a period of about two years before we would issue new contours.

Alderman Garrity asked in that two-year period time, will all of the homes in the 65 contour be done and soundproofed?

Mr. Dillon answered I certainly hope so. It's our intention to do that.

Chairman DeVries stated clarification if I could. You said before you go out for the new contour study two years from now, you will have completed what?

Mr. Dillon answered it is my goal to complete all of the eligible homes during that two year period. The fact that we would not be issuing new contours will not impact our soundproofing program. In fact if anything, it will help it.

Alderman Garrity asked the fact that we're going to suspend, or the Airport is going to suspend it, in two years now we say okay we're going to do this, we're going to go to 60, what kind of an effect will that have on federal funding for soundproofing?

Mr. Dillon stated I think you may be confusing two things. The fact that we're going to suspend the issuance of new contours does not prohibit us to going out to the 60 contour. I'm planning to talk about that tonight. What that does is it solely leaves in the position where we have continued to use our existing eligibility contours. We will not establish new eligibility contours. And quite frankly in conversations that I've had with other airports that in a similar situation that we're in, what they have found when they have developed new contours, is that there is substantial shrinkage of the contours. Meaning less people become eligible for soundproofing versus more people. And the reason for that is over the past five years in particular there's been some major sound initiatives, principally the switch from Phase II aircraft to Stage III, that have resulted in lower noise levels. And I know that sounds counterintuitive that you can have a growing airport and the noise is actually less today than it was five years ago, but based upon Federal standards and some of these changes that occurred in jet technology, that's what's happening. So airports are funding that they're shrinking. So again, there are other reasons why we have to suspend these contours. But quite frankly it works in our favor to do that.

Mr. Dillon continued the last item...the last time the committee met you directed to me develop zoning language that will allow the Airport to go forward with or potentially bringing the eligibility for soundproofing out to the 60 DNL from the 65 DNL. And just again to update you, in order for us to do that, the FAA requires a couple of things. Number one, that the area that now falls within the 60 to 65 DNL contour be declared a noise impacted area via zoning, and that any future construction within that area would not conform to FAA sound attenuation guidelines. As a result, we need to update the City of Manchester's zoning

regulations to include those things in order to make these homes that fall between the 60 and the 65 eligible for soundproofing. So I have draft copies of the zoning...this has been put together by the Airport. It has not been reviewed at this point by any other City department. What you're going to see in the document is that we've taking the opportunity to revise all of the language regarding zoning in the airport district, and while there's a number of pages to that document, quite frankly the only changes that have occurred is that we have taken the opportunity to clarify some of the language to be more descriptive about some of the surfaces that we need protect at the Airport. We've also put language in there that requires what's called a FAA 7460 submittal, at any time there is construction within these designated areas, the submittal needs to be made to the FAA to make sure that that construction will not be an obstruction or a hazard to air navigation. And then lastly, the only other significant is the fact that we've created this new noise district between the 60 and 65 DNL. The process that I would recommend be followed, is that this document be forwarded to the Planning Department for their review and input because they typically handle all of the zoning issues for the City and once that input is received, we can come up with a final draft document and then present this to the full board for a recommendation whether or not it should go to a public hearing. The thing that I would like to point out, and it ties into that last subject that we discussed with the contours, keep in mind that the contours that are covered under this document, become the contours that have been last approved by the FAA. So we will be using the existing contours as part of the zoning document naturally until we come up with new contours. You can anticipate that when we do produce new contours in the future, they will shrink.

Alderman Thibault asked Kevin, you just said that you're going to bring this to Planning so that they can look at this? Because I know they're also working on their master plan, if you will, and this would be an appropriate time to bring it over there.

Chairman DeVries stated you've detailed a few of the changes and if you could just quickly reiterate the changes in this document from the prior.

Mr. Dillon replied you're going to see there's essentially two sections to the document. The A section deals with the surfaces and height issues that we need to protect at the Airport. In that section we've cleaned up the language to clarify those surfaces, try to put it more in laymen's terms, the actual areas that we need to protect. In there there's also a requirement for what's called an FAA 7460. That is a submittal that needs to be made to the FAA for construction within a certain geographic area surrounding the airport, so that the FAA can make a determination whether or not to proposed construction is a hazard to air navigation. Typically that will only be your finding when you're talking about a structure of considerable height or would be in such proximity to the runways



typically it would be our construction that would triggering those submittals. And then lastly, the only other significant changes in section B, which deals with the noise overlay district, it creates an additional district. The district between the 60 to 65 and virtue of creating that noise overlay district, you essentially that a noise impacted area.

Chairman DeVries stated one question for you when you're addressing the obstruction issues or the height issues of the surrounding buildings or projects. We currently do have zoning language in effect, so do you anticipate any kind of need to grandfather any structures that are over the language that you're proposing?

Mr. Dillon answered you'll see there's actually language in the document that says this zoning change will not impact any structure that was in place prior to the date of enactment. Essentially if you...I don't want to get overly complex with it, but the change if you will, in the past we pretty much protected what was called our 34 to 1 approach surface. We are now being much more stringent in protecting a 50 to 1 approach surface. That doesn't mean that construction approvals would not be given, because in certain situations they'll be reviewed, somebody might violate that 50 to 1 surface, but there's a preexisting building in front of it. So the impact would be no worse than exists today. But those will have to be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Chairman DeVries asked and reported properly onto the FAA through the 7460 that you're also adding.

Alderman Gatsas asked the contours that you're talking about, there must be some sort of relative issue in proximity...the north/south runway that comes over the top of the Derryfield water tower on Harrison Hill, which is probably the highest point in the City. The noise there is probably different than the level that's at a 65 contour because the plane is that much closer to the surface of the ground at that elevation. Is there anything in there that takes care of that problem for looking for soundproofing?

Mr. Dillon answered no. Unfortunately the FAA formula is not real good at incorporating topographical issues. There is a study, and quite frankly I'm not too sure of the statues, whether or not it's been completed, but I know it was under way down at Logan. It's called the hillside affect study, where the FAA was trying to take a look to see if hillsides for example created higher noise levels than lower areas. I think based on those findings, there may be some opportunity to have some conversations, but today there's not a real good feel for those types of things that you're talking about, altitude type issues. The only thing that that will take in somewhat is the empirical noise measurements that get incorporated into

the formula. Noise contours are not necessarily developed strictly based upon single noise events for an empirical noise level. That's certainly a piece of what makes up the contour, but it look at other things such as frequency, persistence, how long noise is typically experienced in a particular area, what's the fleet mix of aircraft over that area. So really the only thing that starts to bring in different topography issues, would be the empirical measurements but that's just a piece of the formula. The FAA is actually taking a look at whether or not this formula should be changed. There has been a lot of criticism of the FAA's model as to how they develop these contours because of some of those issues that you're talking about.

Alderman Gatsas stated if somebody stood on Harrison Hill with a decibel meter, they would find that the noise factor is higher there than on South Willow Street.

Mr. Dillon stated and that may be true. In a single noise event, that may be true, but that's what I'm trying to say. That the formula doesn't necessarily look at single noise events, it's actually looking in some respects another runway end may get a higher value where the contour may go further out because there's more frequency there. Maybe a certain runway end will get a higher value because nighttime operations for example get higher values. I forget the exact formula off the top of my head, but generally an aircraft taking off during the day, that same aircraft if would be looked at night, would get credit for ten aircraft because of the time of day.

Alderman Gatsas stated if that's the case, then I would think that that data should be looked at. I would say that most of the aircraft that's flying across there is night aircraft. It probably also includes not so much commercial, but freight.

Mr. Dillon stated I could certainly sit and talk to the FAA to see if there is some way that we can take a look at that and try to account for those things and see how it would factors into the terms of the contour. One of the other things I'd like to just give you to put in perspective because we talking about the 60 contour. Just so you know where the public 60 contour would be today. I have another map and this map lists all of the contours that we have today, but you'll see the bright yellow contour on there is the 60 contour, so you're able to take a look at some of the cross streets to see where some of those runway end points would take this out to. So in essence what we're talking about today is if this zoning change were adopted, based on our current conversations with the FAA, we would be able to make homes within that bright yellow area eligible for soundproofing.

Chairman DeVries asked because we are adopting under our current contour of 60 DNL, is there something built in or does there need to be something in the language to address changes that might need to be reflected and when we go out to

further studies if there is going to be a reduction in our contours. Are we building something into the language so that it automatically is reflective in the zoning ordinance?

Mr. Dillon answered yes. If you look at the language in there, it basically says all of the noise zones that we've created are based upon the current contours or the published contours at the time and those will continue to be adjusted and changed. So the language provides for that. The thing that I do think is very important is if this does go a public hearing, that point needs to be highlighted to folks that these contours would shift. Because you do run the potential that someone today could look at this and say okay I fall within the existing 60 contour, five years from now, they may fall out of that 60 contour. Because this will continue to move every time we take a look at it.

On motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted to forward the report to the Planning Department for review and input within 30 days and report to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for setting of a public hearing.

Mr. Dillon stated I do have one other thing for public information. Just to make you aware, airports across the country this Friday will have the opportunity to opt out of Federal screening. That's where we can elect to replace Federal screeners at the screening points with private contractor screeners. I have continued concerns about the Federal government's ability to allocate appropriate staffing and appropriate equipment to the Airport. That's something that pressing Washington to make sure that we get our fair share of screeners. We were very interest in the program is there was any way that we could on a local level have a much greater stay in terms of those staffing allocations, however, this existing opt out program does not give us that. Quite frankly all it would do is take the Federal shirt off the screener and put a private shirt on the screener. It would still be managed by the Federal Government. So at this point we have made the decision that we are not going to pursue the opt out program, although we are going to carefully watch it, look at those airports that may choose to opt out to see if there is any enhancement of the performance that we have been assured by the Federal government that they will keep this option period open on a rolling basis so that if six months now we elected to opt out we would have that option. But quite frankly the screeners at the Airport are working very hard, I think as individuals they do a very nice job for Manchester Airport, and my concern continues to be the Federal government allocation of resources and equipment and that's the thing that we'll keep our eye on and see if we can get them to do a better job on that.

Chairman DeVries stated I just was considering the announcements that we need to make for the public hearing and normally that would be a posting in *the Union Leader* or whatever, is there any mechanism that we need to take to reach out further. Obviously we can't do mailings to everybody who might be eligible in the 60 DNL or become eligible for soundproofing, but is there a better mechanism that can be suggested or would you consider over the next 30day period as Planning looks at language changes to consider, just to make sure that we are doing the best that we can to reach out to inform everybody so that we can receive feedback.

Mr. Dillon replied we'll take a look at that. I would anticipate something like this we would go well beyond the newspaper notification. We'll probably actually use radio media, potentially even TV to get that word out.

There being no other business to come before the committee, on motion of Alderman Garrity, duly seconded by Alderman Gatsas, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee